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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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Letter dated 20 February 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest acts of Palestinian terrorism directed against Israel.

Yesterday evening, at approximately 8 p.m. (local time), several Palestinian gunmen attacked an Israel Defense Forces position near the village of Ein Arik. Gunmen burst into a room where several off-duty soldiers were resting and opened fire at close range. The terrorists approached the soldiers by way of an access road that Israel had made available to facilitate the free movement of workers. In total, six Israeli soldiers were killed and a seventh was moderately wounded and evacuated to a nearby hospital. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's own Fatah faction, claimed responsibility for the attack. The same group claimed responsibility for two attacks on Monday which killed four Israelis and which was referred to in my letter dated 19 February 2002.

In another incident yesterday, an alert Israeli bus driver foiled an attempted suicide attack near Mehola. A suspicious individual attempted to board a bus but was blocked by the driver. As the bus pulled away, the terrorist detonated explosives strapped to his body. No one was injured.

These incidents are the latest in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism that have been detailed in my letters dated 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126), 22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November 2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September 2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17

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September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

The State of Israel holds the Palestinian leadership fully responsible for yesterday's terrorist attack, which was perpetrated by forces under the direct authority of Chairman Arafat. These same forces also proudly claimed responsibility for both of Monday's attacks as well as for scores of other acts of terrorism over the course of 17 months of Palestinian violence. Despite its many declarations and commitments, the Palestinian leadership continues to plot violence against Israel, supports and harbours terrorist organizations, and refuses to arrest known terrorists operating freely in its territory.

The Palestinian leadership has committed itself to completely and unconditionally renounce the use of violence and terrorism; it has accepted the Mitchell Report which calls, first and foremost, for a complete cessation of violence; earlier this month, Chairman Arafat, once again, condemned terrorist attacks and reiterated his commitment to put an end to such activities in an article published in *The New York Times*. And yet, terrorism continues to escalate as the Palestinian leadership fails to follow up its words with the requisite action. In such a situation, it is impossible to regard Palestinian declarations as anything other than platitudes uttered for the benefit of international audiences. Peace will not come to the Middle East so long as the Palestinian Authority tolerates the existence of terrorist organizations in its territory and continues to support acts of violence directed against Israel.

The Palestinian Authority must assume its responsibility, in line with its repeated commitments, to end the violence and return to the path of dialogue and negotiations. The international community must continue to exert full pressure on the Palestinian leadership to stand by its commitments and work towards a complete cessation of hostilities.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Aaron **Jacob**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.